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THE ROLE OF THE MEXICAN URBAN HOUSEHOLD IN DECISIONS ABOUT MIGR--ETC(U)
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LEVEL II

The Role of the Mexican Urban Household in Decisions about Migration to the United States

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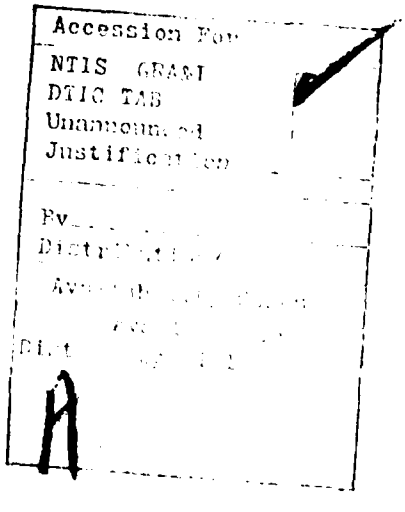

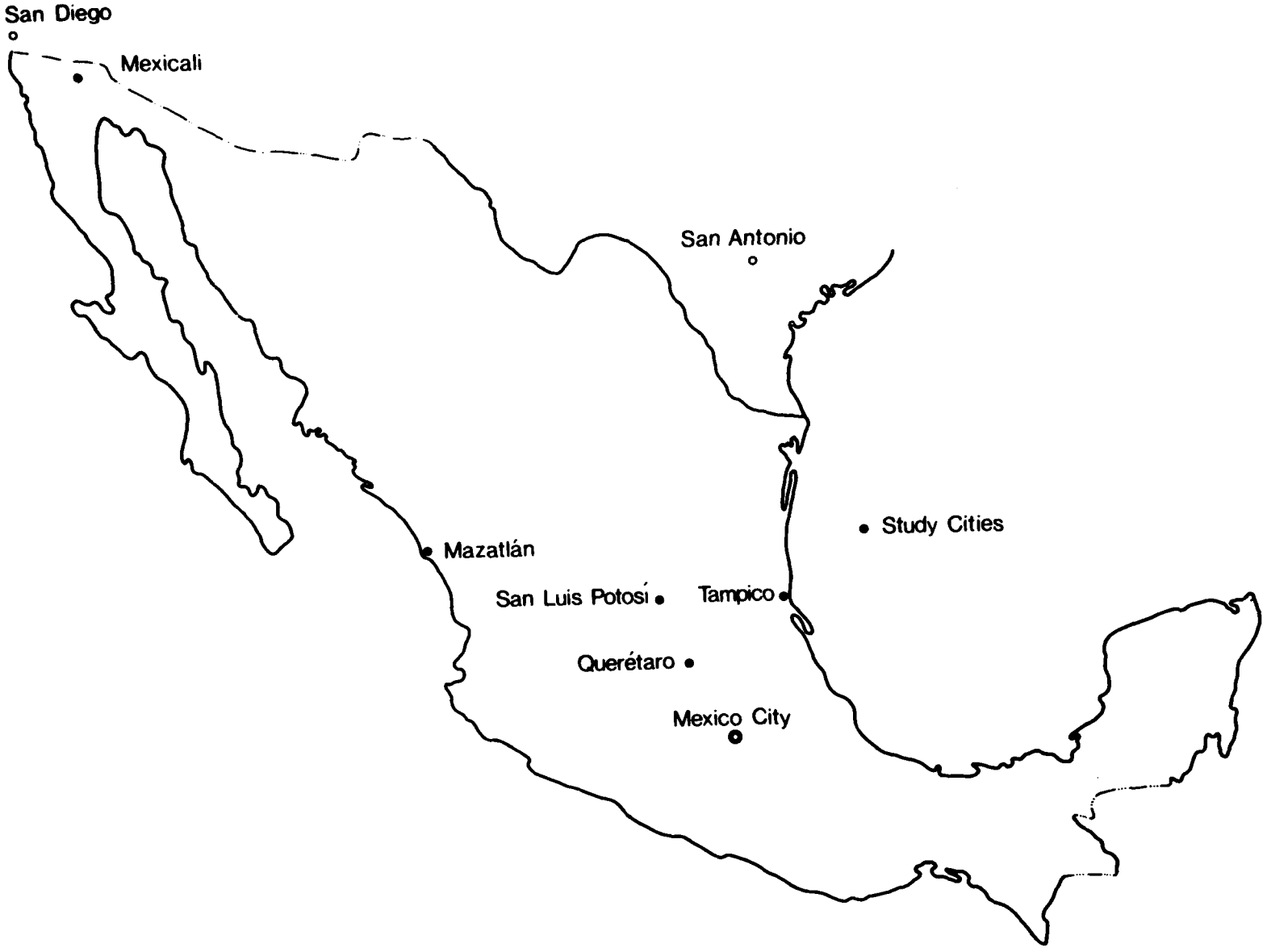
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Study Cities
Mazatlán
San Luis Potosí
Tampico
Querétaro
Mexico City

SUMMARY AND ABSTRACT

This study of the urban households of five cities in Mexico has shown that the decision to send migrants to the United States as well as to other parts of Mexico is taken by more mature households with larger families. The economic status of these large households falls above the 30th and below the 90th percentile of the population. This means that there is no well-defined "target group" which is contributing a sizeable proportion of migrants. At least not in the cities.

Migrants to the United States come from households that are better off than the others, despite the fact that the individual incomes reported in the households are no larger. Sending migrants to the United States increases household income. As a result of their higher household incomes, living conditions are better for the sender households. As a result of these conclusions we suggest that coming to the United States is part of an overall income generation strategy on the part of large families who are attempting to keep the family together. This is no foreign adventure, nor a covert attempt to gain admittance to the United States. If the same opportunities were to exist on the other side of the border, the sender households would choose to stay and take advantage of them.

Studying international migration is to see how poor people keep families together. An appreciation of the economic situation of the urban households underscores the irony that in order to save the family, some members have to give up the home of their birth and work abroad.

Because the households that send migrants to the United States are slightly better off, and more mature, we can expect (ceteris paribus) migration to increase in the next years as rising incomes raise more households

to the point where they can afford to migrate. The demographic conditions already exist for an expansion of the migration rate. If migration to the United States from Mexico by poor Mexicans is regarded as undesirable by both sides, then the only way that we can see to slow the flow is by improving employment and income on the Mexican side.

Our analysis of family dynamics and household formation in Mexico in this and other studies has convinced us that the aims and desires of the senior householders towards forming a culturally desired extended family can only occur when there is some degree of economic security. This in turn begets the social and psychological security of the culturally preferred family form. Policy initiatives on the part of the United States which facilitate these conditions assure that the sender households will not have to send members abroad to attain them.

PREFACE

This study is part of a larger study called Tipología, which is being conducted by the Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad y de la Vivienda Popular (INDECO), in Mexico. The larger study is a diagnostic study of the physical, social, cultural, and economic conditions of the inhabitants of all the cities of Mexico over 50,000 population. There are 73 such cities.

INDECO has graciously permitted us access to the data from this study in recognition of the material role that Murphy played in its design. INDECO is in no way responsible for the conclusions, the analysis, or the interpretations made in this report.

We have many people to thank. Arq. Ignacio Cabrera, the director of the whole study, has been a constant source of intellectual challenge. Lic. Ignacio Ruiz Love, who implemented the project design in the pilot study of Oaxaca, has been a good friend, close companion and critic of our thinking. The Subdirector General of INDECO, José María Gutiérrez, who conceived of the project in the first place and has steadfastly supported it over the years, has provided encouragement to all of us. The Director-General of INDECO, Arq. Luis Rubalcava, has provided energetic and forceful leadership, as well as his gracious permission to work on Tipología.

We very much regret not being able to use the fine book by Sidney Weintraub and Stanley Ross, recently (1980) published by the University of Texas Press, but are pleased to note that we have independently taken not dissimilar routes to our goal of understanding the whole process.

Lastly to Mr. Dan Fendrick at the United States Department of State, we wish to express our thanks for his gracious patience that has allowed us the time to finish the analysis and its presentation.

THE ROLE OF THE MEXICAN URBAN HOUSEHOLD IN DECISIONS ABOUT MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

Introduction

In this report we emphasize the role of the household and family in shaping decisions regarding migration of household members to the United States.[1] In taking this anthropological view, we believe we are more realistic than some of our colleagues who treat migration to the U. S. as a personal decision made by an individual in search of some egoistic goal. Further, we embed our discussion of household decision making about migration in a cultural, symbolic and socioeconomic context. By cultural, we mean we recognize the importance of trying to understand the Mexican viewpoint, and Mexican family organization and economic strategies, as well as the role of meanings and values in shaping household decisions. Finally, we discuss the demographic structure of the family in interaction with economic conditions as this interaction pushes family members into the migratory flow.

Two of the many factors to be considered in this interaction of family and economics should be kept in mind throughout this discussion. First is the importance of the integrity of the family to the poor urban Mexican. Second is the fact that the vast majority of Mexican families covered in this study are poor, even poorer than national statistics indicate, because of the unequal distribution of wealth and income in Mexico.[2]

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[1] We differentiate between a family and a household in the usual way: a family is a kinship unit, while a household is a residential unit. Both terms are here defined in the way Mexicans define them. The members of the house are those people who are named when you ask "¿Quiénes son que viven en la casa aquí?" Sometimes, and in some parts of Mexico, these people are called caseros. Family members are those named in answer to questions about familiares. We are fortunate that Mexican cultural traditions provide us with serviceable definitions. For those addicted to low level definitional problems, a hermenetic approach to the concepts "household" and "family" is to be found in Buchler and Selby (1968:Chap.2).

[2] The Gini index of inequality in income distribution shows Mexico to be more unequal in this respect than any other Latin American country except Haiti. This condition is currently being officially recognized in Mexican policy making, especially in fiscal matters.

Economic necessity presses on these families in ways that readers of this report may find difficult to understand, being so far outside their own experience. Poverty means that the integrity of the family and its economic well being are not always the same; sometimes these two goals clash, and family members may be sent away from home to work in another city, or another country. There are trade-offs in the deployment of a household's members in the national or international labor market, and the urban Mexican household is well aware of them. For this reason, we have chosen the household as the unit of analysis.

SECTION I: THE FIVE CITIES

THE STUDY

The five cities examined in this report are Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Mazatlán, Mexicali, and Tampico. Data on households in these cities have been collected during the past four years by the Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad y de la Vivienda Popular (INDECO-MEXICO), Mexico's national community development agency. INDECO, an agency within the Secretaría de Asentamientos Humanos y Obras Públicas (which corresponds roughly to H. U. D. in the United States), is currently carrying out a diagnostic study of the social, economic, and cultural conditions of all of Mexico's cities with populations of 50,000 or more--73 in all--including the five cities discussed in this report. Survey data are being collected by social workers and university students under the direction of senior social scientists. The interview protocol covered ten topics: (1) House type and use of the home; (2) Building materials in home; (3) Education and demographic data on all members of the household; (4) Distribution of expenses in the household; (5) Distribution of time in necessary travel by household members; (6) Type and degree of regularity of land and house tenure; (7) Availability of municipal services in the colonia; (8) Migratory history of the household; (9) Priorities of respondent for social betterment; (10) Attitudes toward and evaluation of present situation and future possibilities. There are 233 items in all.

A modified two-stage quota sampling method was used (described in detail in Appendix I). This method closely approximates a random sample of each city: weights have not been used to project to the whole city.

The total number of households interviewed for the five cities was 5,095. The breakdown by city of households interviewed and number and percent of households sending migrants to the United States (hereafter designated as sender households, or simply senders)[3] is as follows:

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS AND NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS SENDING MIGRANTS TO THE U. S. BY CITY

	CITY				
VARIABLE	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Number of Households	1024	1003	1124	1057	887
Number of Senders	173	32	25	114	87
Percent Senders	17%	3%	2%	11%	10%

Border cities and newly industrializing cities contribute more than their share of migrants to the stream. This has been known for some time, as Conroy discusses in his report (Conroy 1980). The elevated rates of migration

[3] That is, households reporting family members living in the U. S. at the time of the INDECO survey (1978).

found in these types of cities result from the distortions in the traditional economic patterns and modes of adaptation which occur with the introduction of industrialization, which requires a pattern of labor organization unlike an artisan and petty commodity system. What is surprising from the data presented in Table 1 is the rapidity with which the migration stream responds to industrial development. San Luis Potosí, whose sample has the highest proportion of sender households of any of the cities discussed in this report, was one of the poorest cities in the country with little industrialization as late as 1970 (Unikel 1976, Cauthorn and Hubbard 1976, and Conroy 1980).[4] Apparently, less than ten years of development in San Luis Potosí has sufficiently changed the economic and demographic structure to give it a much higher than expected rate of migration.

TABLE 2

INDICES OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: FIVE CITIES(5)

	UNIKEL'S INDEX OF SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		CONROY'S INDEX OF SOCIOECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY	
	Index	Rank in 32-City Scale	Index	Rank for 5 Cities
Mexicali	6.22	3	.59	1
Tampico	3.97	7	.28	2
Mazatlán	2.19	13	-.14	4
Querétaro	1.67	16	-.07	3
San Luis Potosí	.66	22	-.65	5

[4]Luis Unikel (1976), who examined the rates of development and industrialization for all of Mexico, found that the region containing San Luis Potosí was the poorest in the country except for Chiapas-Oaxaca. On his index of socioeconomic development, San Luis Potosí ranked twenty-second of 32 cities. This low ranking is confirmed by Conroy's (1980) index of socioeconomic opportunity, which places the city last of the five we discuss in this report.

[5](See bottom of next page)

A POCKET CHARACTERIZATION OF THE FIVE CITIES

We will discuss the five cities in order of socioeconomic development from low to high: San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Mazatlán, Tampico, and Mexicali.

San Luis Potosí

Founded by Guachichil Indians in the thirteenth century, San Luis Potosí became an important colonial site which played its part in the struggle for independence as well as in the Revolution of 1910. Not much that was Mexican passed it by, except the wave of economic development after the Second World War. It was not until the 1970s that development, strongly backed by both a vigorous state government and a newly committed federal government, began to change the traditional character of the city.

Between 1960 and 1970 San Luis Potosí had one of the lower population growth rates in Mexico: 3.8% annually.[6] Its population has increased from 160,000 in 1960 to an estimated 304,100 for 1977.[7] Its three principal industries in order of value of output are primary metals, textiles, and food processing. Together they account for 61% of the industrial output of the

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[5]Conroy's index is based on a factor analysis of eleven variables: seven economic indicators dealing with value of real wages, worker productivity, and employment availability, and three social indicators having to do with the availability of modern utilities, health care and educational opportunity. Conroy et al. (1980:27) note "only 38 of the 105 regions of the combined areas show positive deviations from the mean characteristics. All the 16 U. S. regions are 1.75 standard deviation units of more above the mean; only three Mexican regions are within one standard deviation of that (i. e., greater than .75); Mexico City, Monterrey, and Guadalajara. There is a gradual gradation toward higher levels as one moves from South to North."

Unikel's index is based on a factor analysis of twelve variables dealing with "modern" consumption patterns, volume of consumption, capitalization of agriculture, employment opportunity, worker output, availability of urban services, educational levels, and health levels of the population. (Unikel:1976:361)

[6]The national growth rate between 1960 and 1970 was 4.2% (Unikel 1976). Unikel is the source for population growth figures.

[7]Unless otherwise noted, the figures on population are taken from the IX Censo General de la Población, México, DF, 1970.

city.[8] The percentage of the economically active population currently employed in the formal sector is 52%. The three principal sources of employment are service (25%), transformation industries (23%), and commerce (14%).

At 5.6 members, the average household size is high.[9] More important for the study of migration, the average family size is very high at 8.3 members. If one excludes family members currently residing in the United States, the family size remains high at 7.9. Fifty-two percent of the households send members out to live in other places in Mexico and the United States. The total number of migrants living in the United States is 475--not as high as that for migrants living in Mexico City (750) or in other cities of Mexico (that is, exclusive of San Luis and the national capital--1,113), but more than the number of migrants to rural areas (416).[10] San Luis Potosí has the highest number of sender households in our five-city sample (17%), as well as the highest average number of migrants abroad per household (2.69).

Querétaro

Originally a way-station for northbound pilgrims and adventurers, Querétaro had become by 1680, when its great cathedral was dedicated, the third city of Mexico, outshone only by Puebla and Mexico City. By the beginning of the 18th century the Muy Noble y Muy Leal Ciudad de Santiago de Querétaro was one of the most prosperous cities of New Spain.

Between 1960 and 1970 Querétaro enjoyed a vigorous (5.1%) rate of population growth; its population has grown from 67,700 in 1960 to 167,500

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[8]Source: Censos Industriales, Secretaría de Industria y Comercio. It does not include extraction industries (mining), oil refining, or petrochemicals.

[9]The national average for all Mexico in 1970 was 4.9 members.

[10]Tables presenting these and other figures for San Luis and the other four cities may be found in the appendices.

in 1977. Its three principal industries in order of value of product are food processing (it is known as the gateway to the Bajío--historically the most productive agricultural area of Mexico), machine tool manufacturing, and the manufacturing, servicing and assembling of vehicles. Together these three account for 76% of the industrial output of the city. The percentage of the economically active population currently employed in the formal sector is 58%. The three principal sources of employment are transformation industries (24%), services (23%), and agriculture (18%).

The average 5.6 members per household is high. But family numbers are not markedly higher at 6.1, and this figure is unaffected by the exclusion of the few persons living outside the country. The low rates of emigration are quite striking; only 14% of the households have members living outside the city. Nine percent have sent members to other urban areas (247 individually in all);[11] 6% (187 people) are living in Mexico City, while only 2% of the households of Querétaro have sent migrants into the rural areas (66 people).

In our survey of Querétaro, 50 people were reported as currently living outside the Republic of Mexico, the lowest number for any of the five cities. Economic conditions would appear to warrant a greater exodus; household incomes are near a sample low at a median of M.N.$6,450.00 per month, and the income of the household head is also lowest of the sample at $4,971.00.[12] But as the

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[11] Here and elsewhere, reference to "other urban areas" does not include Mexico City, which is treated in the survey as a separate category.

[12] "Moneda Nacional." The Mexican peso is presently worth about 4.5 U. S. cents. Unless otherwise noted in this report, the dollar sign ($) will be used to indicate Mexican currency. Income figures given for both households and individual workers will always be the median monthly figure from the INDECO survey.

argument develops in the second section of the text, we will see how it is that two kinds of conditions are necessary to produce elevated rates of out-migration: demographic conditions in the household and economic conditions in both the region and the household. Families are small, and when households are in early stages of development in the life cycle as they are here, emigration does not take place to any marked degree.

Mazatlán

Mazatlán has enjoyed a full measure of economic ups and downs. In the nineteenth century it was a prosperous state capital until 1873, but then lost its preeminence on the Pacific and became comparatively isolated for lack of communicating roads from the interior and good port facilities. When the road was completed from Durango the tourists brought an economic uptrend, but little significant industrialization occurred until recent years. This is changing today as Mazatlán has become the largest port on the Pacific coast and is busily developing opportunities as a processor of semi-finished imported goods.

Between 1960 and 1970 the city's population grew briskly at a rate of 5% a year. Its population has increased from 75,800 in 1960 to an estimated 169,600 in 1977. Its three major industries in order of value of output are food processing (particularly marine products--50%), beverage manufacturing (16%), and manufacturing, servicing and assembling vehicles (11%). The percentage of the economically active population employed in the formal sector is 58%. The three principal sources of employment are services (26%), agriculture (24%), and transformation industries (15%).

The average of 5.2 members per household is the sample low, although it is still somewhat higher than the national average. Family membership is a little higher at 5.6, and reduces to 5.5 when you deduct those members of the

family that are living in the United States. Looking at family and household size alone, one would surmise that emigration would be low, and it is. Only 16% of the households report having migrant members living outside the home. The greatest number (220) are working in other urban areas (10% of the households), while only 4% of the households report a total of 64 members in Mexico City; another 4% of the households have 74 located in rural areas. Thus the migratory data from Mazatlán are much like that found for Querétaro. The total number of emigrants living in the United States is only 57--again on the same scale as Querétaro.

Mazatlán shows the highest median income for the household head at $5,984.00, but the lowest household income at $6,016.00. Since the number of workers per household is not especially low in Mazatlán (1.3 compared to 1.4 average for the other four cities), the very small difference can be accounted for in part by the very low contribution of workers other than the principal wage earner to the household income and, of course, the absence of remitted income. The living costs in Mazatlán are higher than in Querétaro or San Luis Potosí, judging by the higher minimum wage of $3,400.00 per month.

Tampico

Tampico is an oil town. It grew and thrived on the Faja de Oro which provided wealth for the few, jobs for some, and an up-and-down economic history of boom and bust for all. Tampico is beginning to enjoy a boom again now that Mexico is undergoing petroleum development for the third time.

Tampico's population between 1960 and 1970 grew at the rate of 4.4% per annum. Its population has increased from 176,100 in 1960 to 376,800 estimated for 1977. After oil refining and petrochemicals, the three major industries in order of value of the remaining output of Tampico are food

processing (32%), beverage industry (22%), and chemicals (9%).[13] The percentage of the economically active population employed in the formal sector is 55%, and the four major sources of employment are services (28%), commerce (15%), transformation industries (14%), and petroleum (14%).

The average household size is 5.5. Family membership is high at 7.8 members, but this figure is reduced by migration to the U. S. to 7.6. The demographics of the household and family, as well as proximity to the U. S. border, suggest that migration to the U. S. would be moderate, and it is. Over half (53%) the households report having at least one member living outside the home, and 114 households (11%) report family members in the United States. The total number of such family members is 227. Thirty-four percent of the households have sent 1,152 individuals to other urban areas. Twenty-two percent send a total of 543 migrants to Mexico City, and 18% send 501 members into the rural areas to live. The total number of migrants of all kinds is almost as great as in San Luis, at 2,423 (compared to San Luis' 2,754). The average household in Tampico has 2.29 migrants, the second largest number (again, after San Luis) in the sample.

Mexicali

Mexicali is the capital of the state of Baja California, and contains approximately one quarter of the state's inhabitants. Its population growth rate between 1960 and 1970 was around the national average at 4.2%:[14] The population has grown from 174,500 inhabitants in 1960 to an estimated 361,300 in 1977. The three major industries in order of value of output are food processing (28%), transportation stock maintenance (16%), and equipment

[14] In 1960 the censused urban population for all Mexico was 12,746,685, which increased by 1970 to 21,547,568, making a national increase in urban population of 8,800,883 persons. Source: Unikel 1976.

assembling and manufacturing (7%). The percentage of the economically active population employed in the formal sector is 51%, the lowest in the five city sample. The three principal sources of employment are agriculture (33%), services (20%), and transport (15%).

Again, the average household of 5.6 members is larger than the national average. But the average family size is moderate (at 6.2 members), and only moderately reduced by foreign migration to 6.0 members. Such family and household demographics suggest moderate levels of migration, which, given the proximity of Mexicali to the U. S. border, is about right. Only 24% of the households report members living outside the city. Only 12% report family members working in other urban areas, but the proportion of households reporting workers in rural areas (8%) is greater in Mexicali than the number reporting migrants in Mexico City (6%). So far as number of migrants is concerned, Mexicali reports a total of 536 people living outside the home, 171 living in other urban areas, 149 living in rural areas, and 73 in Mexico City. Ten percent of the households report a total of 143 people living in the U. S. which, again, is a moderate number.

Mexicali has one of the highest costs of living outside the federal district, with a minimum salary of $4,900.00, the highest by far in the sample. Household heads earn a median of $5,043.00 per month, and total household income comes to $7,002, reflecting an important contribution on the part of other members of the hosuehold. It would appear that the economic incentives to migrate from a high-cost, low-wage area are offset, in some sense, by the absence of severe demographic pressures, which lead to the moderate rates of migration for Mexicali.

Conclusion to the Pocket Characterization

The remarks here made about the relationship between urban social and economic characteristics and the rates of migration are not meant to be definitive. Conroy (1980) has covered these topics with an exhaustive analysis of rural and urban areas of both the U. S. and Mexico; our remarks about the cities are intended to give a reader unfamiliar with Mexico some idea of the sample population, and, in particular its migratory behavior. But the remarks are not without purpose. They are intended informally to introduce the reader to the drift of our argument in its broadest context.

The emphasis in this introduction on the interaction between demographic and economic variables causing emigration is not at all new. In the next section of this report we focus more closely on household structure and dynamics. We believe that migration is not an individual decision, but one taken by the whole household. As a result one must understand the growth and development of the Mexican (urban) household in order to understand the underlying dynamics of the migration process. We also believe that to understand migration in the context of the household, the family, and kinship ties and commitments is to see it from the point of view of the Mexicans themselves.

SECTION II: COMPARING HOUSEHOLDS OF MIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES WITH HOUSEHOLDS OF NON-MIGRANTS

Introduction

In this section we take the point of view that the analysis of migration must be based on the analysis of the Mexican household as the decision-making unit. As Conroy et al. (1980) and others have shown, there is little question that prevailing wage rates and employment opportunities, appropriately discounted for distance and difficulty of travel, can account for a good deal of the variance in migratory flows. Here we argue that incentives and deterrents of migration do not impinge directly on the individual, but rather indirectly; their effects are mediated by the family and household. We believe that the importance of the developmental cycle of the Mexican household has been overlooked and that it plays a determining role in setting the size and composition of the migrant pool. In this point of view we differ from people who have studied selectivity of migrants because they, for the most part, have focused on the attributes of the individual, and treated the individual as the decision-making unit, and explained differential migration rates as the aggregate outcome of multiple individual choices. In our view the family is of paramount importance in Mexican society, and nowhere so much so as among the urban poor. We make a good deal of this point in our report on the poor of Oaxaca (Murphy 1979, Selby and Murphy 1979, Murphy and Selby 1979). There we studied the strategies of the poor in rising out of the direst poverty. We found that the way they were able to organize their families and households was absolutely crucial to success in escaping extreme poverty. We emphasize the need to understand the dynamics and constraints in family organization, as well as the role of its members in determining who, if anyone, will leave the household in

search of work. Our work among the urban poor in Mexico has shown that this approach has ethnographic validity--that is, it is truer to the way that Mexicans themselves perceive the whole process. Although we do not believe that people are conscious of all the processes that affect them or that they consciously make decisions taking them into account, we do believe that if the analyst is going to adopt a decision-making framework for analysis, he or she ought at least to get the unit of analysis at about the right level.

We call households that send migrants to the United States "sender households" or "senders" to emphasize the active role that the household plays in recruiting members for external work and in financing the risky venture.[15] Households that do not send migrants to the United States are called "non-senders"; they are readily, easily, and constantly converted into sending households with the maturing and expansion of the family.

We should mention that the topic of migration in the Mexican household is not exhausted by a comparison of "sender" households with households that do not send members out of the country. Thirty-one percent of the households we sampled sent migrants somewhere--to rural areas, to other urban areas, to Mexico City. Only 8% of the sampled households sent migrants to the United States.

In this section of the report we are to discuss the differences between sender and nonsender households. As the attributes that distinguish the households of families with members in the United States are distinguished from those of families who do not have members living in the United States, we

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[15]The question about migration that was asked of all respondents in the five cities was in the following form: "Are there members of your family currently outside the city?" ("¿Hay algún familiar viviendo fuera de la ciudad?") It was understood by interviewer and respondent that the person had to be living outside the city. Weekly commuters would not count as migrants, unless they had an established residence in another place. U. S. migrants were identified by asking how many family members were living abroad. ("¿Cuántos viven en el extranjero?")

hope that a clearer picture will appear of the process whereby migrants are recruited from urban households. We will be able to dispel some myths about the characteristics of migrants, as well as their origins and purposes. We will discuss the differences between senders and others under eight topical headings:

1. Migratory Behavior
2. Household Structure and Composition
3. Household Size
4. Dependency Ratios
5. Family Size
6. Income
7. Jobs
8. Position in Economic Class Structure

We will end with a conclusion, and a statement of the possible relevance of our analysis and data for policy making in the Republic of Mexico, and the United States of America.

1. Migratory Behavior

Sender households are consistent: they send migrants to the United States, but they also send migrants to every other part of Mexico as well. Migration to the United States is only a minor part of an overall strategy of sending family members out to work wherever work is to be found. The average number of migrants per household is greater for the sending households in all five cities we studied. And the overall differences can be seen in Table II-4,[16] where it can be seen that these households send an average of 1.2 family members to work in Mexico City, compared to 0.22 for other households.

[16]As for Section I, supporting tables for Section II may be found in the appendices.

In the next section we will see that this omnibus migration strategy is appropriate for households of a certain degree of development in the domestic cycle.

2. Household Structure and Composition

There has sometimes been a suggestion in the literature on Mexican migration that migrants came from desperate families who lived a hand-to-mouth existence in urban hovels and rural slums--desperate in prospect and burdened with a never-ending stream of children. Each of these statements is false. Sender households are not derelict and desperate or burgeoning with children and unmarried youths. Our data show they are no larger than households with no members abroad (Table II-5). Senders have lived longer in their present homes than have nonsenders, as well (Table II-6). Their houses are nicer, in the sense that they more frequently own houses built with permanent construction materials--the casa definitiva (Table II-7). Far from derelict, they are house proud: they have done more work on their houses, on the average, than nonsender households (Table II-8), and they enjoy regular tenure of their lots and houses more than do others (Tables II-9 and II-10).

All in all, households with members abroad are better established and enjoy a slightly preferable life style according to Mexican definitions than do the nonsenders. Perhaps as a corollary, the former show significantly higher levels of educational achievement, even though the education of the household heads is no better than that of other heads. Sender household children showed about two grades more education than children in other households, while the difference in educational achievement of the whole household was only slightly less.[17]

[17] Family educational achievement was determined by summing the number of years of education for all members of the family and dividing it by the summed ages of those family members who were old enough to have begun or finished schooling. The education of the children (continued bottom of next page)

However, the most striking differences between the two household types lie in the area of household development and family structure. Sender households have reached a more developed state in the domestic cycle: they are older: household heads are 46 years old on the average, compared to nonsender household heads, who are 42 years of age. The average sender family has completed fertility, while the average nonsender family is still in the final years of child-bearing and thereby involved in the raising of young children.

Since the concept of domestic cycle is so important to this discussion, we provide here a brief description of the way this concept is defined in anthropology.

Domestic cycle analysis tracks the process of change in domestic groups over time (Fortes 1954, Good 1958, Fejelman 1977). Families (or domestic groups) change and age, growing, splitting up, rejoining, dying. The processes of growth, fusion, and fission must be taken into account in order to understand the underlying stabilities in the social process (Foster 1978).

For our analysis we have used the simplest possible typology of domestic groups. We define five types, or stages of the domestic cycle.

Stage 1. The first stage in the development of the domestic group occurs when a single person or married couple without children moves away from the natal household to form a separate household.

Stage 2. The second stage occurs when a couple has children--and it remains in this stage so long as they continue to have children.

Stage 3. The third stage occurs when fertility is complete, and all the children are over the age of five.

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[17](continued) was calculated only for children of school age. The educational attainment of the sender household children was the equivalent of completed junior high school while the nonsender only managed about one year of secondary education.

Stage 4. The fourth stage occurs when all the children have reached wage-earning ages--i. e., all are over the age of 15.

Stage 5. The last stage occurs when the children move away and leave the aging parents to live by themselves.

Table 2 gives the percentages of households in all five cities in each stage of the domestic cycle. Previous work on these categories for Oaxaca, a poor city in southern Mexico which has many of the social and economic attributes of San Luis Potosí, gives us interpretive insight on the meaning of being in the various stages.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE FIVE STAGES OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE: FIVE CITIES

	STAGE				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Percent	10%	34%	30%	15%	11%
				N=5094	

The households in the first stage of the domestic cycle are not only the youngest,[18] but they are the best educated and have the best jobs, largely

[18] The average ages of the household heads by life cycle stage are as follows:

Life Cycle State	Average Age	
1	28	
2	35	
3	43	
4	54	
5	62	(N=4,873)

in the modern or formal sector. They enjoy job stability and the benefits of the social security system.

The households in the second and third stages are the worst off among the majority of urban poor. They spend greater proportions of their incomes on food, they have the highest dependency ratios, largest households, lowest per capita incomes, lowest degrees of job stability, and largely unimproved housing conditions. It is only as the households mature into middle age and reach Stage 4 that the economic and social indicators start tipping in their favor.

Our analysis of stages in the domestic cycle in Oaxaca showed us that Stage 4 households are able to rise socially and economically by incorporating distant relatives into their households and retaining married children and their spouses. The efficient management of relationships with married children and their spouses and with in-laws improves the wage-earning power of Stage 4 households. However, to achieve this goal, the head of household and his or her spouse must induce their married children to remain in the household, and this requires defrayal of the expenses of marriage, provision of adequate living quarters, material help in getting a job, and access to resources of the household. Staying with the family has to be emotionally and materially rewarding for the married children. Social and sentimental relations between the generations are not easily managed, either. The household head must be firm, and a proper padre de familia, though not so authoritarian as to give the appearance of wishing to control all household resources, thus denying access to the children. Further, the household head must invest in the children's education, but not so much as to raise their opportunity costs of staying at home so high as to make it foolish for them to remain. Making all the necessary arrangements and carrying on the covert negotiations among

household heads, the married children, and the in-laws is a formidable feat (Lewis 1959, 1961).

But it is as desirable to establish a three-generation composite household as it is difficult. The earning power of such a collective is great, and the consumption economies of scale are impressive (Lazear and Micnael 1969). As a result, we found that in Oaxaca social and economic indicators turn up substantially in Stage 4 households compared to the other stages.[19] The proportions of income devoted to food purchases go down as the income per consumption unit goes up.

In Oaxaca this road out of poverty was about the only one for the very poor that made up 40% of the city (Murphy 1979). But then the city was so poor that only 11% of the households reached Stage 4, compared to 15% in the five-city sample. In the five-city sample relatively less oppressive economic conditions, in particular relatively easier employment conditions permit the formation of a larger proportion of Stage 4 households than in Oaxaca.

But it is evident from an examination of the frequency of occurrence of households in the various stages among senders and nonsenders that the former have more Stage 4 ones. Part of this excess can be attributed to the relatively greater age of the household head, which was already noted. But most of it must be attributed to the greater success that sender households have in forming and maintaining these very desirable large, extended households. Obviously, we cannot demonstrate the causal relationship--but it is consistent with other data on the urban poor to suggest that these households are sending

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[19] No household need become a Stage 4 household. You cannot become one merely by growing older. If your children left home as they reached maturity, you could well go from Stage 3 (with, say, one 14-year-old child at home) directly to Stage 5 (a couple over 40 living alone). Stage 4 is an accomplishment, not an inevitability.

out migrants so that they can remain large, extended families. The size of the household that stays at home is not larger than that of the nonsenders. But it was, before family members went out to work so that it could remain a Stage 4 household. In a sense one could say that Mexican nationals are not migrating to the United States to escape dire poverty. They are migrating to build their traditional three-generation households, so that can pay proper respect to their kinfolk and particularly their parents. Their efforts are successful, as Table 3 shows. And if it is true, the preoccupation of U. S. American authorities with the numbers of migrants who plan to and do take effective measures to stay permanently in the United States seems misplaced.

TABLE 3

STAGE FOUR DEVELOPMENT IN SENDER AND NONSENDER HOUSEHOLDS: FIVE CITIES

	San Luis	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Sender	23%	28%	32%	31%	21%
Nonsender	17%	19%	12%	16%	13%
All	18%	19%	13%	18%	13%

Genealogical Complexity

There is no consistent difference in the degree of genealogical complexity in sender households. One would expect it, since part of the strategy of forming efficient economic collectives includes the incorporation into the household of distant relatives and retainers as either wage earners or child tenders. Greater genealogical complexity was noted for the most successful poor households in Oaxaca (Selby and Murphy 1979). But for the five-cities sample, only Querétaro had a higher rate of genealogical complexity for senders.

Since we believe that these households use all strategies available to them to increase their economic efficiency, and since incorporation of distant relatives is one well-known one, we were surprised to see it so infrequently employed by these households.

Number of Workers

Sender households are more efficient in the sense that they can deploy more workers into the work force than can other households. (The U. S. migrants are not counted as part of the household work force.) Table 4 shows the contrast, city by city.

TABLE 4

AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKERS PER HOUSEHOLD:
SENDERS AND NONSENDERS FOR FIVE CITIES

	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Senders	1.57	1.63	1.40	1.47	1.26
N=	173	32	25	114	87
Nonsenders	1.47	1.31	.91	1.10	1.21
N=	847	963	1084	966	799
Probability Level for t	(.211)	(.036)	(.732)	(.000)	(.568)
			Total N=4,275		

As we shall see later, additional workers in sender households have no better jobs than workers in other households, nor do they earn higher wages and salaries (although there is a slight tendency overall for sender households to earn higher incomes per adult equivalent unit). These households increase their incomes relative to others merely by putting more workers into the work

force.

Household Size

Households of senders are no larger than nonsenders (Table II-5). It is not size, but age and development stage that give the senders their advantage (ignoring the contribution of U. S. migrants for the moment). Finding no size differences was important since it required us to look at structure and dynamics in the household to account for their economically advantaged position in the first place.

The mean size of sender households is 5.52, while that of the non-senders is 5.50.

Dependency Ratios

One would expect low dependency ratios for sender households, in line with our description of them as older and more developed. We calculate two kinds of dependency ratios: (1) the worker-dependency ratio, which is the ratio of nonworkers to workers in the household, and (2) the age-dependency ratio, or the ratio of household members not in the economically active age group (14 to 65) to those who are in that age range (see Table II-11).

There are two ways that the ratio of workers to nonworkers can be reduced: either by reducing the number of dependents or by increasing the number of workers. Sender households do both. The average number of children in these households is lower than in other households (2.7 vs. 3.0), and the number of wage earners is higher (1.48 vs. 1.22). So, although senders are no different in size from nonsenders, their dependency structure is different: they are more efficient households in the sense of reducing dependency.

Family Size

By definition, not all family members are present in the sender household. Nor are they all present in the nonsender households, since these latter

are distinguished from the senders only by virtue of the fact that they do not send migrants to the U. S., while often sending them elsewhere in Mexico.

On the average, the families of sender households are larger than others (Table II-12). This is an important push factor: demographic pressure. They are larger if you count all family members, and they are larger if you only count those that live in Mexico--except for Tampico.

There seems to be an optimum range for household size for each city. The mean of the range is probably not much greater than the national average for household size, 4.9 persons. When larger households come of age and the first children start to marry, decisions have to be made. It is clear from the outset in large families with many children that the padre de familia will be unable to retain all his married children in the household. Some, at least, will be lured away by their in-laws. Most will choose to stay with their natal family only for a short period of no more than five to seven years, and then hive off and form independent nuclear households of their own. It is when there is a queuing problem that migration becomes an active alternative. When there are too many children for places in the household, they are directed into the migratory flow.

The phrase "place in the household" is, of course, shorthand for all those incentives for staying that were mentioned earlier. Some could be discussed as resource ratios--given the current stage and composition of the family (with one or perhaps even two married children already established in the household), the resource ratios might not be sufficiently attractive to hold a child out of the migratory flow. Or perhaps relationships had deteriorated to the point that only extremely favorable ratios would retain the child. Or, perhaps the future prospects of a larger inheritance share which by custom goes to those who stay at home dimmed enough to remove it as a strong incentive to

stay. For all of those reasons working age adults may decide to leave the family and enter the migrant stream.

A related and important question concerns the direction and causality in the relationship between family size and migrant flow: does greater fertility cause migration, or do poor households in Mexico raise their levels of fertility so that they can send out the "excess" bread winners? Is high fertility and subsequent migration an integrated strategy set which alone permits survival or some economic mobility (Nutini and Murphy 1970, Wiest 1973)? We do not think that people consciously manipulate their fertility levels, purposely raising them for their future economic welfare. Other commentators, such as Angel Palerm, former Director of the Center for Graduate Studies of INAH, believe that they do. He believes that fertility rates are under conscious control of the poor, and that they have been placed in such a difficult position economically that they are forced to try to breed themselves out of extreme poverty. Our Oaxaca work has convinced us that the most effective strategy for the very poor in Oaxaca is to rise out of poverty by having many children and inserting them into the work force as early as possible. In Oaxaca, for example, we have suggested that there is a "profit coefficient" associated with children among the lower strata of the urban poor--the lowest 40% of the city. Although definitive data are not known to us, our observations of both child raising and expenditures on children have led us to believe that the average child among the poorest stratum of the city of Oaxaca would repay his expenses threefold by the time he or she left the natal household (Selby and Murphy 1979:147). We doubt that such dramatic rates of repayment are experienced among the five cities' populations, but we do not need to assert that they are. We merely need to believe that the

balance of accounts is in the favor of the natal household.[20] If the "coefficients" are positive, it appears that they remain so even if the children migrate to work, perhaps especially so since any remitted income would only have to offset the migrant's share of fixed household costs which can be kept to a minimum.

Income

There is no significant difference between the median incomes of the heads of sender households and those of the heads of the other households; and a mixed pattern of differences holds for second workers as well (Table II-13). But a clear pattern of higher incomes for sender households can be seen in both household income and the per-adult equivalent income measure. The median

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[20] It may be worth citing a note in our report on Oaxaca concerning the costs of children (see Selby and Murphy 1979:147, n. 3).

> The very poor cannot spend much to raise their children. The results of their enforced economy are to be seen in the elevated mortality and morbidity rates which mark the population as a highly stressed one. Food costs of the children are not high, with the result that nutritional stress is pandemic among this poor majority, and nutrition-related deaths are apparently on the rise again in 1979. (This last statement is based on casual observations, and data are not yet available from this part of Mexico to verify this possible rising trend, which has been reported in the press for Mexico and Brazil.) A child who leaves school after the primary years and goes to work at a salary rate two-thirds that of the minimum (salary) would be able to repay his parents' costs in four years or less, by our informal estimates. If the parents' debt is repaid by age 20, then there are eight years' earnings that the household can regard as pure "profit" since the median age at which children leave the household is 28 years.
>
> We are, of course, not suggesting that the Oaxacan poor think of their children in purely monetary terms. Conversations about the cost/benefits of earning versus further education in Oaxaca are no different from discussions about what college which child will attend elsewhere.

incomes for senders and nonsenders for all five cities are given in Table 5. The + in the top row of the table indicates that the total sender household income is higher than that of other households.

TABLE 5

MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME FOR SENDERS AND NONSENDERS: FIVE CITIES

	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Senders Higher?	+	+	-	+	+
Household Income					
Sender	$8,019	$7,100	$5,150	$8,800	$7,975
Nonsender	6,838	6,200	6,019	6,128	7,010
Senders Higher?	+	+	+	+	+
Per Adult Income					
Sender	$1,900	$1,167	$1,580	$2,571	$1,126
Nonsender	1,600	1,000	1,575	1,867	1,117

We do not have a direct measure of remitted income. It was originally estimated from differences between the sum of the reported incomes and the reported total income, but subsequently this method was dropped because of its unreliability. In lieu of a direct measure we can report that there are greater differences between reported household incomes for senders and nonsenders than can be accounted for by the contributions of the additional

workers in the sender households. This was clear in Table II-11. But we can take another tack: if, for example, one subtracts the estimated amount contributed by the extra workers from the household incomes of the nonsenders, the senders still have higher incomes (except in Querétaro, where there are only 25 sender households (see Table 6).

TABLE 6

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SENDERS AND NONSENDERS, CONTROLLING FOR THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ADDITIONAL WORKERS IN THE SENDER HOUSEHOLDS

Type of Household	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Sender Median Household Income	$8,019	$7,100	$5,150	$8,800	$7,975
Deduct Additional Wages	-190	-368	-768	-388	- 61
	$7,829	$6,732	$4,382	$8,412	$7,914
Nonsender Median Household Income	$6,838	$6,200	$6,019	$6,128	$7,010
Difference in Favor of Sender Households	+991	+532	-1,637	+2,284	+904

Note: The deduction is calculated by taking the difference between the number of workers in sender and nonsender households and multiplying the difference by the median per-adult income value for senders in the corresponding city. These are called "additional wages" in the table.

The income data suggest that economic pressures are best seen as directed at the household as a collectivity, rather than at the individuals comprising it. One of the complaints we have about the "selectivity"

literature is that it deals with the wrong unit of analysis. We believe that households are selected for potential migration and not individuals. The income data show this clearly. When one compares individual incomes in sender and nonsender households, one finds that there are no differences. The disparities occur only at the household level. Whether disparity occurs because of the remitted additional incomes of the migrants, or whether the relative economic security of the sender household made it possible to invest in a member's risky trip to the border is very hard to say. We suspect the latter, but cannot discount the former. The importance of the issue underscores the need for accurate estimates of migrant income remitted to their families in Mexico.

Aside from the purely economic considerations that may underlie the choice to send migrants to the United States and elsewhere in Mexico, there are demographic considerations that are important. Our analysis of the demographic differences between sender and nonsender households prompts the conclusion that coming to the United States is best viewed as a risky opportunity that can be indulged in by families that have demographic security, that is, enough children at home to provide a fully dimensioned family life as well as economic, psychological and social security for the parents. With enough demographic security the household can decide to adopt the risky strategy of sending a migrant son or daughter to the United States, and hope that if they are successful, a remitted income will eventually arrive to defray the expenses of sending them in the first place.

Jobs

Occupations of household heads for sender and nonsender households are presented in Table II-14. In discussing jobs and the propensity to send migrants to the United States, however, we have to consider Tampico as a special

case (see Tables II-15 and II-16). In Tampico the households that send migrants are better off on most measures. The head of the sender household in Tampico has a better job than those who do not send. (They are most likely petroleros and belong to the most elite and exclusive work force in the Republic of Mexico, the oil workers.) These household heads have much better jobs than heads of nonsender households, and the second workers in sender households tend to hold more white collar jobs, and enjoy entrepreneurial or managerial careers to a greater degree than their counterparts in the non-sender households. Sender households in Tampico (alone) are more likely than nonsenders to have fringe benefits as well, as they are to have salaried jobs in the formal sector of the economy. Their employment records show significantly less job change than the nonsenders. All in all, the jobs held by the senders in Tampico are much better than those of the nonsenders.

Jobs and Careers in the Other Four Cities

If we ignore Tampico, however, the contrast between the jobs or careers becomes much less sharp. We classified the 17 occupational categories of the Mexican census into four: (1) unpaid work, (2) blue collar work; (3) white collar work, and (4) owners and entrepreneurs, and found that there were no differences between senders and nonsenders. The jobs of heads of household and second workers were no different. Nor did they contrast on the frequency with which they enjoyed fringe benefits or stable employment (with the exception of San Luis Potosí, where sending household did enjoy greater stability).

We do not feel then that jobs can be considered a differential push factor in the cities of Mexico--at least in those cities where the employment patterns are not somewhat unusual in the sense of being dominated by a privileged worker elite.

Migratory Behavior of Four Economic Classes

One last examination of the economic situation of sending and nonsending households will be useful. In our previous studies which have been alluded to in this report we have found it very convenient to assign households to an economic class based on their per-adult equivalent income. There are four classes. The poorest class is those who have an income below that of a family of two adults and two minor children with a total household income less than the minimum salary. The cut-off point which defines the upper bound of the second class is 1.8 minimum salaries. This boundary corresponds to a "poverty line." Those below it, in the first and second class are beneath the poverty line. (The minimum salary is generally admitted to be inadequate for the poor, since no one can live on it at all satisfactorily--in particular no one can feed, clothe, and house a family without incurring nutritional stress. The third class is defined as those living between the poverty line, and the minimum level of income which is required to enter into the commercial life of the city. We use the Fondo de Vivienda's definition here of 4.8 minimum salaries. This is the amount that FOVI requires for a person to enter the commercial (state-supported) mortgage market. People whose per-adult equivalent incomes are above the FOVI standard are said to be "making it."

In order better to remind ourselves of the meaning of these categories we have named them: I. The Very Poor, II. The Poor, III. Those with Barely Adequate Incomes, and IV. Those Who are Making It.

The Distribution

Table 7 gives the number and percentages of households in the four economic classes.

TABLE 7

ECONOMIC CLASS MEMBERSHIPS IN THE
FIVE CITIES AS A WHOLE

	ECONOMIC CLASS			
	I Very Poor	II Poor	III Barely Adequate	IV Making It
Number	1821	951	1054	386
%	43%	23%	25%	9%

If there were any overall economic "push" that was generating disproportionately high migration rates to the U. S., we would expect that migrants would be overrepresented among the poorer classes. The precise opposite is the case. On a city-by-city basis we see about the same pattern repeated each time (Table 8). The lowest class is underrepresented, and the other three are mostly overrepresented. First, the data for the five cities. A+ (plus) means that the percentage of sending households in a given class was greater than the percentage of nonsenders.

TABLE 8

FIVE CITY COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC CLASS OF SENDER AND NONSENDER HOUSEHOLDS

	ECONOMIC CLASS			
CITY	I Very Poor	II Poor	III Barely Adequate	IV Making It
San Luis	-	-	+	+
Mazatlán	-	+	+	+
Querétaro	-	+	-	+
Tampico	-	+	+	+
Mexicali	-	+	+	-

Notes: The two "errors" in the table are trivial. The number of class III sending households from Querétaro is only 3. Had it been 4, the sign would have been reversed. Similarly, with Mexicali, the negative sign in the last column represents a difference between 2.0% (nonsender) and 1.3% (sender).

Reaggregating the data for all the cities, the expected pattern appears. Sending households are underrepresented in the poorest class, and overrepresented in the three upper economic classes. Clearly migration is not a strategy for the very poor. Migration to the U. S., in our view, should be seen in perspective. For the Mexican household, the decision to migrate to the U. S. is almost incidental, a byproduct of a general strategy to send its members everywhere in search of good jobs. It would be well for U. S. policy makers to think of Mexican-U. S. migration from a Mexican point of view, because then they would see what an unattractive strategy it is. When it pays off, it pays off well, provided the polleros or coyotes do not make off with the earnings. But the potential loss is great. What if the family members stay in the United States? Ron Grennes (1977) has pointed out that at least for the cities of Puebla and Mexico City there is some evidence that urban migrants tend to stay in the U. S. more than rural migrants. Then the migrant is lost to the family forever. Lost as a person, and lost as a potential income source, for (judging by parental complaints) the remittances will diminish quickly with time.

In this report we have tried to show some of the dynamics of Mexican society as a context of the study of migration. We hope to have convinced the reader that the individual as unit of analysis was a bad choice in the past. It should not be the individual, but rather the decision-making household that we examine. We should see the push factors as operating upon the household and the family. We should see migration to the U. S. as a disagreeable strategy taken by households who are in danger of exceeding the optimal range of household size, and are converting potential necessity to hope and opportunity in sending their members out in search of work.

SUBSTANTIVE AND POLICY CONCLUSIONS

1. This study of the urban households of five cities in Mexico has shown that the decision to send migrants to the United States and to other parts of Mexico is taken by more mature households with larger families.

2. The economic status of these potentially large households falls between the 30th and 90th percentiles of the population.

3. This means that there is no well-defined "target group" which is contributing a sizable proportion of migrants, at least not in the cities.

4. Migrants to the United States come from households that are better off than others, despite the fact that the individual incomes reported in the households are no larger. Sending migrants to the United States increases household income.

5. As a result of their higher household incomes, living conditions are better for the sender households.

6. As a result of these conclusions, we suggest that coming to the United States is part of an overall income generation strategy on the part of large families who are attempting to keep the family together. This is no foreign adventure, nor a covert attempt to gain permanent admittance to the United States. If the same opportunities were to exist on the other side of the border, the sender households would choose to stay and take advantage of them.

Studying international migration is to see how poor people keep families together. An appreciation of the economic situation of the urban households underscores the irony that in order to save the family, some members have to give up the home of their birth and work abroad.

7. The demographic conditions (high fertility, hopefully decreasing infant

and child mortality) already exist for an expansion of the migration rate. If migration to the United States by poor Mexicans is regarded as undesirable by both sides, then the way to slow the flow is by improving employment and income on the Mexican side.

8. Our analysis of family dynamics and household formation in Mexico in this and other studies has convinced us that the aim of the senior householder to form a culturally desired extended family can only be realized when there is some degree of economic security. This in turn begets the social and psychological security of the culturally preferred family form. Policy initiatives on the part of the United States which facilitate these conditions will reduce the utility of sending members abroad and thus the tendency of households to do so.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

THE SAMPLE AND THE SURVEY

In this appendix we describe the data and how they were obtained. The data were gathered following a research design formulated by A. D. Murphy and a group of professional social scientists and architects from the national offices of the Instituto Nacional Para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad y de la Vivienda Popular (INDECO-MEXICO) during the spring and summer of 1977 in the city of Oaxaca, Mexico. This study is part of a nationwide study, to be completed during the next three years, of every city with over 50,000 inhabitants. The purpose of the study is to enable INDECO to rationalize the process of urban planning in the secondary cities of Mexico, where the government hopes to concentrate a larger portion of the future urban population of Mexico. Because INDECO's prime concern is to provide housing and services to those households that fall outside the government's social welfare programs (such as Seguro Social and ISSSTE), the agency is interested in obtaining information that will allow them to understand the situation of households that lack social security and welfare. Oaxaca was the first city to be surveyed and served as a test for the method and instrument to be applied throughout the country.

The study has two phases. The first is a study of the whole city using A Method for Survey-Evaluation of Urban Dwelling Environments (Baldwin 1974), developed by the School of Architecture and Planning of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) and related publications (Caminos et al. 1969). The second phase of the study consisted of giving a socio-economic questionnaire to a sample of the city's population, making it possible to bring together the physical/social environment as described by the first phase with pertinent socio-economic data which can be analyzed statistically.

Examples are drawn from the study of Oaxaca, which was co-supervised by Murphy and Lic. Ignacio Ruiz Love.

PHASE I

The method devised by M.I.T. was adapted with virtually no modifications by INDECO for the first portion of the study.

First, available information was used to put together a general picture of the city's population growth, climate, spatial configurations of growth, types of land tenure, patterns of land use, and so forth. This information was gathered from government agencies and from "qualified informants" such as local social scientists and politicians who had knowledge of the city. The data were then used, along with the observations of project people, to divide the urban area into "localities," which were

> relatively self-contained residential area(s) within an urban context. In general, (a locality) is contained within physical boundaries that are of two types: barriers and meshing boundaries. Mountains, water, limited-access highways and sharp changes in land use are considered barriers. Main streets and political, or municipal, divisions are considered meshing boundaries. (Caminos et al. 1969: x).

Because the M.I.T. criteria for defining localities were physical for the most part, the city of Oaxaca was initially divided by a team of architects in consultation with the social scientists. After looking at air photos of the city and making several inspection trips to different areas, we identified twenty-four localities in Oaxaca meeting the criteria set out in the research design.[1] These localities became the units of investigation in the next step of the survey.

Two-person teams consisting of an architect or engineer and a social scientist checked for homogeneity within each locality by walking every street. In accordance with M.I.T. methodology, areas found to differ in land tenure, housing styles, age of settlement, and the general socio-economic condition of the population were designated "sub-localities" and noted on a map. There were 116 in all, and they corresponded almost exactly with the political divisions -- the colonias, or neighborhoods -- of the city. These sublocalities, or colonias, then became the units of study for Phase I. Having canvassed an entire locality, the research team chose within each sublocality a representative segment of 400-by-400 meters.[2] Detailed notes were taken as to the most common house types and construction materials, available infrastructural services, socio-economic situation of the residents, and land tenure within each neighborhood.

With this information in hand it was the job of the survey team to choose the most typical block in each colonia.[3] The team surveyed this block by measuring its dimensions, counting the number of lots and houses, and drawing a detailed map of the use of space. In addition, a typical house within the block was measured and a plan drawn with notations as to construction type, services available, age, and general condition of the dwelling. This home was then considered to be the typical house for that neighborhood.

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[1]While the M.I.T. method specifies heavy reliance on air photos, we found that in Oaxaca this was not possible, because the latest photos of the city date from 1973 and have been considerably outdated by the changes occurring since then. The project did take its own air photos, which were later used to construct maps of most of the localities in the city, but resources were not available to obtain photos of a sufficiently high quality to be u used as the M.I.T. metnodology suggests. In any event, the project's on-the-ground approach, while more time-consuming, afforded the research team with greater direct knowledge of the city.

[2]The use of a 1600-square-meter area as the basis for the sampling of available services is based on the assumption within urban geography and planning that this is the ideal usable space for an urban household. The M.I.T. survey is designed to see if it is possible for a household to fulfill its needs within a reasonable walking distance from its home. We found no such segment in Oaxaca.

[3]"Within each locality segment a primarily residential block (is) selected to allow comparison of areas and densities that are homogeneous. The block is bounded on all sides by circulation so that the ratio of circulation (or service) toareas served can be compared." (Caminos et al. 1969: x).

While the architect was measuring a home and gathering physical data on the lot, the social scientist interviewed an adult member of the household living in that home and with one other on the block. These interviews concerned family life history and the history of the neighborhood.

With the completion of this phase of the investigation, we had a good general picture of the city -- its history, economic structure, climate, demographic profile and spatial distribution of its population.

In addition to providing the data for a general description of Oaxaca, the first phase of the study was designed to develop a typology of distinctive living systems, or neighborhood types. The M.I.T. designers and most urban planners see a high positive correlation between systems of housing and site tenure and socio-economic status of the inhabitants. (This proved to be only partially true in Oaxaca; socio-economic status and these two variables were partly independent. For this reason, the socio-economic and cultural characteristics were included in the criteria for establishing the eight distinctive living systems of Oaxaca.)

The notion of housing/tenure system, while central to the study, is not a rigid concept which requires that all regions of a city be placed in a prescribed set of categories -- e.g., suburb, shanty town, invasion, apartment. Rather, it is important that systems of land use and housing for a particular city or region be ethnographically as well as empirically valid. For example, in Mexico City, where an M.I.T. survey was carried out, for the poorer populations four types of housing systems were identified: ciudades perdidas, containing approximately 2% of the entire population of the city; vecindades, 23%; colonias populares (which tend to have their origin in land invasions or some other type of irregular acquisition), 39%; and unidades de habitación (government-spon sored projects), 6%. This division of a city contrasts with Nairobi, another M.I.T. study site, where vecindades take in 49% of the population; garden houses, 23%, and apartment complexes, 28%.

In Oaxaca we wanted our classification of living spaces in the city to reflect the complex relationship between land tenure, type of housing, and the social welfare of the population, rather than simply housing/tenure systems. To do this we took into account the income of household heads and a series of socio-cultural variables which would give some indication of the quality of life in the locality. On the basis of our discussions and interviews with people during Phase I, we looked at indices of education level; migration; the degree of intracolonia social cohesion (as reflected in the number and types of local organizations and whether the colonia used a communal labor system for the development of local infrastructure); the attitudes of the residents towards political and economic development; and the general morale of the colonia, as suggested by the residents' expressed feelings about the neighborhood and its relation to the rest of the city. The combination of these physical, legal, economic, and social variables led us to define the following eight types of living spaces: invasions, colonias populares with very low incomes, colonias populares with low incomes, and colonias populares with moderate incomes, site-and-service projects, pueblos conurbados (or urban villages), the center city, and middle-class housing. They can be briefly described.

Neighborhood Types

Invasions. Settlements recently established on invaded land are not a frequently encountered living system in present-day Oaxaca, although invasions historically have played a role in the development of the city. The area presently occupied by invasions is about 1% of the total area of the city, and, except for one group near the old zoo, invaders tend to be holding land of marginal value. The defining feature of invasions is insecurity of rights to one's house site. Because of the recency of their invasion, residents may be removed by the civil authorities or the soldiers. Land tenure is irregular by definition in invasions. There is little permanent housing and almost all residents are extremely poor.

Colonias Populares. Generally colonias populares are older, irregular settlements which have either given regular title by the government or are in the process of "regularization." They cover over 50% of the city's area, and a major portion of its population live in them. Because there were so many of them, and they were so heterogeneous, we divided them into three types on the basis of incomes reported during the block interviews. The three types were colonias populares with very low incomes (those in which reported incomes for the head of household were less than the federally-established minimum salary of M.N.$1800 per month). We differentiated these from low-income colonias populares, where household heads reported incomes between one and two minimum salaries. The third type were the moderate-income colonias where household heads reported incomes of two or more minimum salaries. There was an increase in the quality of life in the colonias populares as one moved up the economic scale from very low to low to moderate incomes, though this was not always the case. Because of effective organization and political cohesiveness, in some instances poorer colonias have been able to construct facilities and get the city to provide utilities and services not available in wealthier areas. This was especially true if the poor colonia had existed for a significantly longer period of time.

Pueblos Conurbados. These neighborhoods are distinguished from the rest of the city by their unique historical and political relationship with the center. They are older independent communities which have over the years become either bedroom communities for the center city or colonias directly under the political control of the city government. While the incomes in these regions are not as high as in other parts of the city, there is a great deal of community spirit which enables the inhabitants to organize themselves for community improvement. In addition, the homes are older, and a fair number of poor families have had the time to build good, permanent houses, spending money and time in small amounts over a longer period. Pueblos conurbados cover approximately 11% of the area of the municipio of Oaxaca.

Site-and-Service Projects. These living sites were a special category distinguished by the way they were developed. In Oaxaca, they are all under the jurisdiction of INDECO, who purchases blocks of land, builds in urban services and sells lots to poor, unsalaried applicants. Because the lot-owners build their own houses, the site-and-service projects

look like colonias populares. But there is evidence in our data that the projects are very successful in providing decent housing in an integrated community efficiently and cheaply. The projects occupy only about 8% of the urban area of the city.

The Central Area (Centro). The oldest portion of the city is the central area, which despite its heterogeneity was designated as one living system. Because the citizens of the city agreed that the centro was one place we decided to follow their lead, as we had in all the other types. The physical boundaries of the central area coincide more or less with the boundaries of the city as of 1940. State and federal governments have focused their attention on this area and all services are available. Social integration in the centro, despite its relatively small size (20% of the city) is low. But it is regarded as a favored living location.

Middle-Class Housing. The middle-class housing system of the city has many of the characteristics of the moderate-income colonias populares and the site-and-service projects, except for their higher income levels and modernity of the houses. They are of two major types: governmental mass housing projects where large numbers of detached and semi-detached houses are built for middle- and upper-level salaried employees, or private subdivisions (fraccionamientos). These last range from improved lots to imposing rows of developer's houses. These housing developments are easily recognized because of the regularity of their layout and modernity of construction. As in similar communities in the rest of the world, social cohesion within these middle-class enclaves tends to be low, as the conditions of the colonias generally do not require collective action on the part of the residents to improve their situation.

PHASE II

The stratification of the city for the purposes of the sample relied on the data from the first phase of the study in conjunction with the division of colonias into living systems. We wished to sample each neighborhood type appearing in each of the twenty-four localities defined in Phase I. This would allow us both to determine how similar the households were socially and economically and to see what prevailing modes of property tenure and type of house were having on the availability of services and peoples' attitudes towards development. The result was a sample of fifty-two different areas of the city ranging from the poorest sections in the most recent invasions to the wealthiest new developments.

Within each of the fifty-two areas to be sampled we chose at least 10% of the households at random, with the stipulation that a total of thirty households be reached in each area. The thirty-home limit would give use the minimal number necessary for valid statistical analysis.[4] Without this lower limit on the number of interviews, some samples would have contained no more than fifteen cases. In the end, we had 1,479 interviews for a city of approximately 150,000 people. This represents about 5% of the households of the city, ranging over the entire economic spectrum.

[4]We were successful for all neighborhoods save the invasions, where interviewers were asked to leave the vicinity before the survey was completed. Because of their uncertain status, residents were perhaps understandably perturbed by the presence of information-gatherers in their midst.

APPENDIX II

TABLES

List of Tables:

TABLE II-1

STATISTICS ON MIGRANTS: FIVE CITIES

City	Total Number Migrants	Total Number Household Interviewed	%Households Reporting Migrants	Urban-Rural Migration % Households	Urban-Rural Migration N	Urban-Urban Migration % Households	Urban-Urban Migration N	Mexico City Migration % Households	Mexico City Migration N	U. S. Migrants % Households	U. S. Migrants N
San Luis Potosí	2,754	1,024	52%	13%	416	26%	1,113	23%	750	17%	475
Mazatlán	415	1,003	16%	4%	74	10%	220	4%	64	3%	57
Querétaro	550	1,124	14%	2%	66	9%	247	6%	187	2%	50
Tampico	2,423	1,057	53%	18%	501	34%	1,152	22%	543	11%	227
Mexicali	536	887	24%	8%	149	12%	171	6%	73	10%	143
Total	6,678	5,095	31%	10%	1,206	18%	2,903	12%	1,617	8%	952

Notes:

1. All migration figures are taken from the 1978 survey of five cities. The basic question was the same in all cases: "Are there members of the family (familiares) living outside the city?"

2. The numbers in the N columns are the numbers of family members reported living outside the house.

TABLE II-2

SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS: FIVE CITIES

City	Population 1977 (1)	Population 1960 (1)	Population Growth 1960-1970 (2)	Household Size (3)	Average Family Size (members in Mexico) (3)	Average Family Size (All members) (3)
San Luis Potosí	304,100	160,000	3.8%	5.6	7.8	8.3
Mazatlán	169,600	75,800	5.0%	5.2	5.6	5.6
Querétaro	167,500	67,700	5.1%	5.6	6.0	6.1
Tampico	367,800	176,100	4.4%	5.5	7.6	7.8
Mexicali	361,300	174,500	4.2%	5.6	6.0	6.2

Notes:

1. The source is ultimately the VIII and IX Censos Generales (1960 and 1970 respectively). But many of these statistics can be found in a most curious compilation of extremely useful statistics, the Mercametría Mexicana.

2. Population growth rates are taken from Unikel (1976).

3. These three columns are taken from the survey data.

TABLE II-3

SELECTED ECONOMIC STATISTICS: FIVE CITIES

City	Minimum Salary (1)	% of the PEA in Formal Sector (2)	Median Income of Household Head (3)	Median Income of Households (3)	Number Workers/ Household (3)	Three Principal Industries (4)
San Luis Potosí	$3,100	52%	$4,979	$7,006	1.5	Primary Metals (34%) Food Processing (14%) Textiles (13%)
Mazatlán	$3,400	58%	5,984	$6,016	1.3	Food Processing (50%) Beverage Manufacturing (16%) Vehicle Assembly (11%)
Querétaro	$3,100	58%	$4,971	$6,450	1.5	Food Processing (35%) Machine Tools (26%) Vehicle Assembly (15%)
Tampico	$4,100	55%	$5,952	$6,810	1.5	Food Processing (32%) Beverage Manufacturing (22%) Chemicals (9%)
Mexicali	$4,900	51%	$5,043	$7,002	1.2	Food Processing (41%) Transport Industry (16%) Equipment Manufacturing (7%)

Notes:
1. Source: INDECO Survey, 1978.
2. Source: Mercametría Mexicana, vid. sub city.
3. Source: INDECO Survey, 1978.
4. Source: Secretaría de Industria y Comercio, Censos Industriales, 1970.

TABLE II-4

AVERAGE NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SENT PER HOUSEHOLD

Type of Household	Number of Migrants to Mexico per Household	Number of Migrants to Other Urban Areas per Household	Number of Migrants to Rural Areas per Household
Senders to U. S.	1.20	1.70	.94
Number of Households	(404)	(407)	(389)
Nonsenders	.22	.40	.12
Number of Households	(3838)	(3834)	(3833)

TABLE II-5

HOUSEHOLD SIZE FOR FIVE CITIES

	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Sender	5.68	4.90	5.64	5.26	5.76
Nonsender	5.59	5.19	5.66	5.67	5.55
N=	1020	995	1109	869	886
			Total N=4879		

TABLE II-6

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE CITY
AND IN THE PRESENT HOME

	Number of Years	
Type of Household	Residence in the City	Residence in Present Home
Senders to the U. S.	14.0	11.1
Number of Households	(98)	(173)
Nonsenders	12.1	7.4
Number of Households	(1041)	(1876)

TABLE II-7

TYPES OF DWELLINGS

Type	Senders	Nonsenders
Shack	2.8%	4.4%
Room	3.3%	6.2%
Apartment	5.6%	5.5%
House (*Casa definitiva*)	88.3%	83.9%
N=	426	4437

TABLE II-8

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

	Senders	Nonsenders
Improved	33.1%	25.3%
Unimproved	66.9%	74.7%
N=	308	3705

TABLE II-9

TYPE OF HOUSE TENURE

Tenure	Type of Household	
	Senders to U. S.	Nonsenders
Regular	85.6	72.9
Irregular	14.4	27.1
N=	(347)	(3917)

TABLE II-10

TYPE OF LAND TENURE

	Type of Household	
Tenure	Senders to U.S.	Nonsenders
Regular	85.1	70.1
Irregular	14.9	29.9
N=	(356)	(4107)

TABLE II-11

DEPENDENCY RATIOS FOR SENDERS AND NONSENDERS

	Nonworker/Worker	Economically Inactive Age/ Active Age
Sender	3.09	1.09
Nonsender	3.51	1.93
N=	3835	4275

TABLE II-12

FAMILY SIZE FOR SENDER AND NONSENDER HOUSEHOLDS

Average Family Size Including U. S. Migrants	San Luis Potosí	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Senders	13.2	8.0	9.4	10.5	8.7
N=	(171)	(32)	(25)	(55)	(86)
Average Family Size Including Members in Mexico Only					
Senders	10.5	6.2	7.4	8.6	7.1
N=	(171)	(32)	(25)	(55)	(36)
Nonsenders	7.4	5.5	6.0	9.7	5.9
N=	(840)	(962)	(1082)	(179)	(797)

Notes:

1. Nonsenders by definition do not have any family members in the U. S., even though they have lots of migrants.

2. The differences between senders and nonsenders were significant for all cities save Tampico when family members in the U. S. were included. It was significant for all but Tampico and Mazatlán when they were excluded.

TABLE II-13

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE INCOMES OF WORKERS
IN SENDER AND NONSENDER HOUSEHOLDS:
FIVE CITIES

Income and Household Type	CITY				
	San Luis	Mazatlán	Querétaro	Tampico	Mexicali
Household Head					
Senders	$5,044	$6,057	$3,000	$5,985	$4,970
Nonsenders	4,964	5,982	4,975	5,617	5,162
Second Worker					
Senders	$3,750	$6,500	$6,500	$4,500	$4,500
N=	75	4	2	21	10
Nonsenders	3,400	5,050	4,100	4,800	5,000
N=	338	123	116	91	103

TABLE II-14

OCCUPATIONS OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Occupation	Type of Household: Senders to the U.S. Total	Senders to the U.S. Percent	Nonsenders Total	Nonsenders Percent
Agriculture	22	5.9	247	6.0
Shopkeeper Roving Vendor Clerk	58	15.5	497	12.1
Private Employee	74	19.7	692	16.9
Public Employee	52	13.9	735	17.9
Professional Employee	18	4.8	105	2.6
Artisan	12	3.2	73	1.8
Construction Worker	9	2.4	197	4.8
Industrial Labor	34	9.0	498	11.4
Service Worker	71	18.9	809	19.7
Entrepreneur	10	2.7	67	1.6
Unemployed	5	1.3	43	1.0
N=	375	97.3*	4099	95.8*

*The percentages do not total 100 because the categories of student and housewife are omitted.

TABLE II-15

CONTRASTS BETWEEN SENDER AND NONSENDER HOUSEHOLDS
ON SELECTED JOB VARIABLES

Type of Household	Percent Enjoying Employment Stability	Percent With White Collar Jobs	Percent With Fringe Benefits	Percent of Household Heads Who Are Owners/ Entrepreneurs	Percent of Second Wage Earners Who Are Owners/ Entrepreneurs
Senders	86.0	56.7	66.2	6.9	.8
Number of Households=	(365)	(358)	(370)	(375)	(354)
Nonsenders	76.9	50.2	65.0	4.2	1.0
Number of Households=	(3773)	(3920)	(3845)	(4099)	(3871)

TABLE II-16

HOUSEHOLDS IN TAMPICO SENDING MIGRANTS TO THE U.S. COMPARED TO THE SENDER HOUSEHOLDS OF THE OTHER FOUR CITIES ON SELECTED JOB VARIABLES

City	Percent Enjoying Employment Stability	Percent With White Collar Jobs	Percent with Fringe Benefits	Percent of Household Heads Who Are Owners/ Entrepreneurs	Percent of Second Wage Earners Who Are Owners/ Entrepreneurs
Tampico					
Senders	84.0	75.9	65.3	5.3	3.1
N=	(94)	(87)	(98)	(95)	(65)
Other Four Cities					
Senders	86.7	50.6	66.5	7.5	0.3
N=	(271)	(271)	(272)	(280)	(289)

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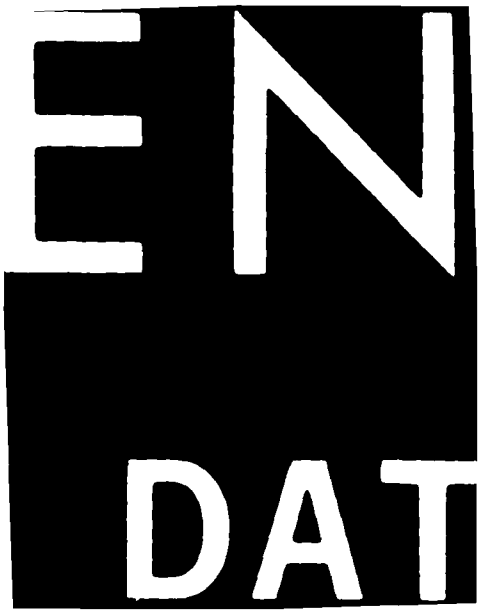
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